CLAIMS

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. In an automatic call distribution system adapted to connect a telephone call of a caller to an agent station through a public switched telephone network (PSTN), a method of repopulating call information identifiers received from the PSTN, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving the incoming telephone call from the PSTN;

transferring the incoming call to a voice response unit (VRU);

requesting, by the VRU, predetermined data from the caller;

receiving, by the VRU, the requested predetermined data;

repopulating a portion of the call information identifiers with repopulated data corresponding to the predetermined data;

transferring the incoming telephone call back to the automatic call distribution system from the VRU along with the repopulated data retained within the call information identifiers;

routing the transferred call to the agent station; and

displaying the repopulated data.

2. The method according to claim 1 wherein the VRU is separate from the automatic call distribution system.

3. The method according to claim 1 wherein the VRU communicates with the automatic call distribution system through the PSTN.

4. The method according to claim 1 further including a host processor operatively coupled to the VRU.

5. The method according to claim 1 further including a database operatively accessible by the VRU.

6. The method according to claim 1 wherein the VRU is programmable so that the predetermined data requested of the caller is capable of being modified.

7. The method according to claim 1 wherein the VRU is interactive.

8. The method according to claim 1 wherein the VRU is interactive and requests the predetermined data from the caller.

9. The method according to claim 8 wherein the caller provides the predetermined

data in response to the request by using a touch-tone keypad.

10. The method according to claim 1 wherein the predetermined data is selected from the group consisting of account number, credit card number, social security number, name and address.

11. The method according to claim 1 wherein the VRU is operatively coupled to a voice recognition system.

12. The method according to claim 11 wherein the voice recognition system is configured to obtain at least one of a name and address spoken by caller.

13. The method according to claim 12 wherein the voice recognition system is configured to convert the least one of the name and the address into digital data, said digital data corresponding to the predetermined data.

14. The method according to claim 1 wherein the call information identifiers include at least one of an ANI (automatic number identification) field and a DNIS (dialed number information service) field.

15. The method according to claim 1 wherein a length of the predetermined data provided by the caller is less than a length of the call information identifiers such that all of the predetermined data is received within the call information identifiers.

16. The method according to claim 1 wherein if the predetermined data provided by the caller exceeds a storage capacity of the call information identifiers, the repopulated data is in the form of a customer record key corresponding the predetermined data.

17. The method according to claim 16 further including a host processor operatively coupled to the VRU, the host processor providing the VRU with the customer record key.

18. The method according to claim 17 further including a database accessible by the host processor.

19. The method according to claim 16 wherein the repopulated data in the form of the customer record key provided to the agent station permits the agent station to access customer data corresponding to the customer.

20. In an automatic call distribution system adapted to connect a telephone call of a caller to an agent station through a public switched telephone network (PSTN), a method of repopulating call information identifiers received from the PSTN, the method comprising the

steps of:

receiving the incoming telephone call from the PSTN;

transferring the incoming call to a voice response unit (VRU);

requesting, by the VRU, predetermined data from the caller;

receiving, by the VRU, the requested predetermined data;

repopulating a portion of the call information identifiers with repopulated data corresponding to the predetermined data;

providing the predetermined data to a database to identify customer data corresponding to the caller;

identifying from the customer data a preferred agent station;

transferring the incoming telephone call from the VRU to the identified preferred agent station of the automatic call distribution system, the repopulated data retained within the call information identifiers; and

displaying the repopulated data.

21. The method according to claim 20 further including a host processor operatively coupled to the VRU.

22. The method according to claim 20 wherein the VRU is interactive and requests the predetermined data from the caller.

23. The method according to claim 20 wherein the predetermined data is selected from the group consisting of account number, credit card number, social security number, name and address.

24. The method according to claim 20 wherein the VRU is operatively coupled to a voice recognition system.

25. The method according to claim 20 wherein if the predetermined data provided by the caller exceeds a storage capacity of the call information identifiers, the repopulated data is in the form of a customer record key corresponding the predetermined data.

26. The method according to claim 25 further including a host processor operatively coupled to the VRU, the host processor providing the VRU with the customer record key.

27. The method according to claim 26 further including a database accessible by the host processor.

28. The method according to claim 25 wherein the repopulated data in the form of the customer record key provided to the agent station permits the agent station to access customer data corresponding to the customer.

29. An automatic call distribution system adapted to connect an incoming telephone call of a caller to an agent station through a public switched telephone network (PSTN), the PSTN providing call information identifiers corresponding the incoming telephone call, the system comprising:

an transaction processor configured to receive the incoming telephone call from the PSTN;

a voice response unit (VRU) accessible to the transaction processor through the PSTN, the transaction processor transferring the incoming telephone call to the VRU;

the VRU requesting and obtaining predetermined data from the caller and repopulating a portion of the call information identifiers with repopulated data corresponding to the predetermined data, the VRU transferring the incoming telephone call back to the transaction processor such that the repopulated data is retained within the call information identifiers; and

the transaction processor routing the transferred call to the agent station such that the repopulated data is provided to the agent station.

30. The system according to claim 29 further including a host processor operatively coupled to the VRU.

31. The system according to claim 29 wherein the VRU is interactive and requests the predetermined data from the caller.

32. The system according to claim 29 wherein the predetermined data is selected from the group consisting of account number, credit card number, social security number, name and address.

33. The system according to claim 29 wherein the VRU is operatively coupled to a voice recognition system.

34. The system according to claim 29 wherein if the predetermined data provided by the caller exceeds a storage capacity of the call information identifiers, the repopulated data is in the form of a customer record key corresponding the predetermined data.

35. The system according to claim 34 further including a host processor operatively

coupled to the VRU, the host processor providing the VRU with the customer record key.

36. The system according to claim 35 further including a database accessible by the host processor.

37. The system according to claim 34 wherein the repopulated data in the form of the customer record key provided to the agent station permits the agent station to access customer data corresponding to the customer.

38. In an automatic call distribution system adapted to connect a telephone call of a caller to an agent station through a public switched telephone network (PSTN), a method of repopulating call information identifiers received from the PSTN, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving the incoming telephone call from the PSTN;

transferring the incoming call from the automatic call distribution system;

obtaining predetermined data relating to the telephone call;

repopulating a portion of the call information identifiers with repopulated data corresponding to the predetermined data;

transferring the incoming telephone call back to the automatic call distribution system along with the repopulated data retained within the call information identifiers;

routing the transferred call to the agent station; and

displaying the repopulated data.

39. In an automatic call distribution system adapted to connect a telephone call of a caller to an agent station through a public switched telephone network (PSTN), a method of repopulating call information identifiers received from the PSTN, the method comprising the steps of:

receiving the incoming telephone call from the PSTN;

transferring the incoming call from the automatic call distribution system;

means for obtaining predetermined data relating to the telephone call;

means for repopulating a portion of the call information identifiers with repopulated data corresponding to the predetermined data;

transferring the incoming telephone call back to the automatic call distribution system along with the repopulated data retained within the call information identifiers;

routing the transferred call to the agent station; and

displaying the repopulated data.